

What is Offer versus Serve?

Offer versus Serve or OVS is a concept that applies to menu planning and to the determination of reimbursable school meals. OVS allows students to decline some of the food offered in a school lunch or school breakfast and is applicable to all menu planning approaches.

Benefits of OVS: Less food waste, cost savings when preparing less food, increased customer satisfaction, and students eat better when they are allowed choices.

OVS: Who, When and Where?

OVS is:

- Required for lunch at senior high schools
- Optional at lunch in lower grade levels
- Optional at breakfast in all grades

Who decides?

- School food authority decides:
 - Whether to implement OVS when optional and in what grades
 - Whether students below high school can decline 1 or 2 food items at lunch
- Students decide what foods to decline

Reimbursable Breakfasts

(Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning)

General requirements for OVS at breakfast:

- Schools must offer at least the minimum serving sizes of all 4 food items from 3 or 4 food components.
- Students must select at least 3 food items.
- Students must take full servings to count toward a reimbursable meal.
- Students may decline any food item, including the milk.
- Students may take a smaller portion of the declined food item.
- Breakfast must be priced as a unit.



Reimbursable Lunches

(Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning)

General requirements for OVS at lunch:

- Schools must offer at least the minimum serving sizes of all 5 food items.
- Students must select the minimum number of food items required (3 of 5 for senior high school; 3 or 4 of 5 for lower grades).
- Students must take full servings to count toward a reimbursable meal.
- Students may decline any food item, including the entrée or milk.
- Students may take smaller portions of declined food items (does not affect price).
- Lunch must be priced as a unit

For more information on OVS please see the USDA's guidance at http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/offer_v_serve.html

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TRADITIONAL MINIMUM MEAL PATTERN REQUIREMENTS
For the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Programs

Serving Sizes

_____ Appropriate grade groups are selected

Lunch K-3 (you may use the minimum serving sizes for 4-12)

_____ 8 ounces fluid milk as a beverage (**2 fat contents:** use **low-fat** choices (1%, skim) if possible)

_____ 1½ ounces Meat/Meat Alternate **or** a weekly total of 7½ ounces with a minimum serving of 1 ounce daily. Choose low-saturated/trans fat choices whenever possible.

_____ ½ cup Vegetables/Fruits (2 different kinds)

_____ 1 serving of Grains/Breads daily (total of 8 servings over the week – **whole grains** if possible)

Lunch 4-12 (you may serve these minimum serving sizes to K-3)

_____ 8 ounces fluid milk as a beverage (**2 fat contents:** use **low-fat** choices (1%, skim) if possible)

_____ 2 ounces Meat/Meat Alternate **or** a weekly total of 10 ounces with a minimum serving of 1 ounce daily. Choose low-saturated/trans fat choices whenever possible.

_____ ¾ cup Vegetables/Fruits (2 different kinds)

_____ 1 serving of Grains/Breads daily (total of 8 servings over the week - **whole grains** if possible)

Lunch 7-12 (optional)

_____ 8 ounces fluid milk as a beverage (**2 fat contents:** use **low-fat** choices (1%, skim) if possible)

_____ 3 ounces Meat/Meat Alternate **or** a weekly total of 15 ounces with a minimum serving of 1 ounce daily. Choose low-saturated/trans fat choices whenever possible.

_____ ¾ cup Vegetables/Fruits (2 different kinds)

_____ 1 serving of Grains/Breads daily (total of 10 servings over the week - **whole grains** if possible)

Breakfast K-12

_____ 8 ounces fluid milk as a beverage **or** on cereal (**2 fat contents:** use **low-fat** choices (1%, skim))

_____ ½ cup fruit **or** vegetable **or** full-strength fruit or vegetable juice

_____ One serving from each of the Grains/Breads and Meat/Meat Alternate components **or**

_____ Two servings from either Grains/Breads or Meat/Meat Alternate

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